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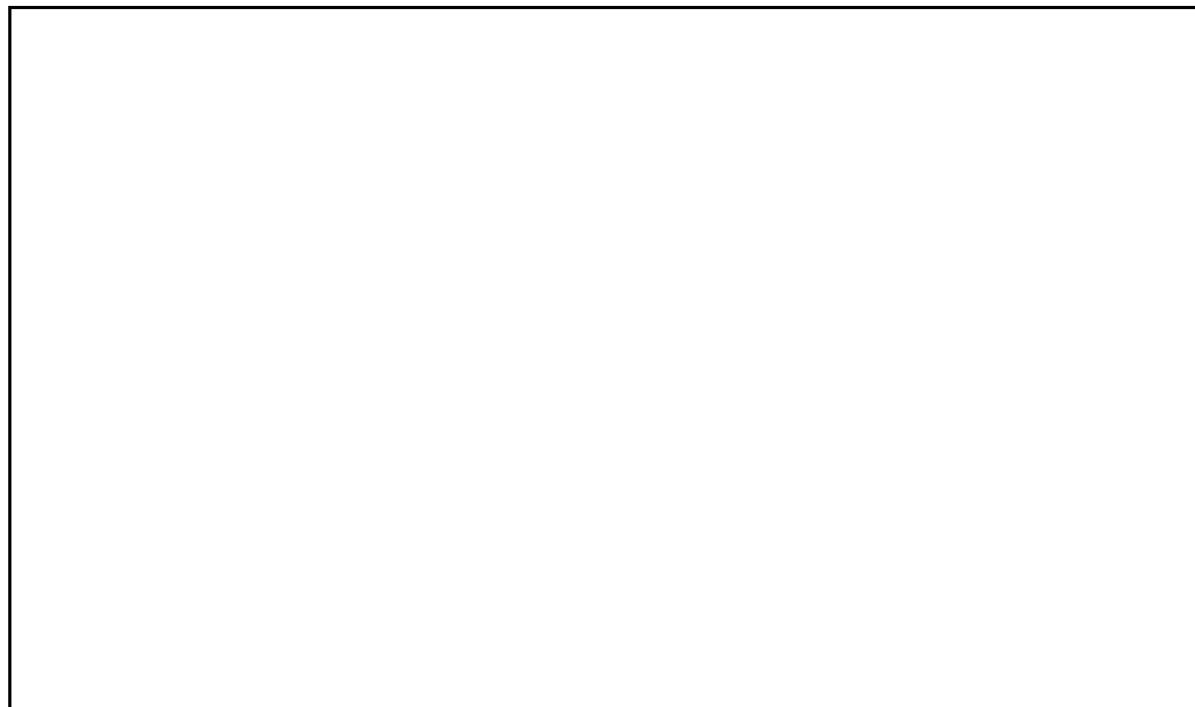
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5. OPPOSITION CONGRESSIONAL PARTIES' BOYCOTT
COMPLICATES ECUADORAN POLITICAL CRISIS

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[redacted]

Congressional members of two opposition parties boycotted the inaugural session of the Ecuadoran congress on 10 August, thereby blocking for the

[redacted] present the congressional certification of Conservative Ponce Enriquez' victory in the presidential elections of 3 June. The maneuver further complicates the unsettled Ecuadoran political situation, which was marked by an attempted military uprising in Portoviejo on 6 August.

A number of alternatives to Ponce's accession to power are reportedly being planned. The two opposition parties boycotting congress are seeking to combine and install the president of the lower house as de facto provisional president of the nation. President Velasco, on the other hand, is reported considering the defeated candidate of a third party as the most acceptable compromise choice for a provisional president. According to the American embassy, Velasco's popularity has reached a high level, and he might feel obliged to continue in office beyond the scheduled 1 September date for the inauguration of a new president.

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THE ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION
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Nothing of significance to report.

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